

Penn-Northwest **DIGEST**

Moving Mercer County, PA forward



From the Desk of Rod Wilt



On behalf of our team at Penn-Northwest Development Corporation, it is my pleasure to introduce the first-ever edition of the *Penn-Northwest Digest*, a quarterly-produced digital publication dedicated to informing our region on how we are moving Mercer County forward! As the lead economic development organization for Mercer County, we are always looking for new ways to engage our membership, our government and community leaders, and our friends across the region. This publication will offer insights into what makes Mercer County, PA a great place to live, learn, work and play, and will recap economic development activities going on across the entire County. Each edition will focus attention on one of our great communities in Mercer County, provide a look inside one of our commercial or industrial companies, and introduce you to at least one high-impact individual who is "Making It in Mercer County!"

Our intent with the *Digest* is to tell meaningful stories that can be shared across the County and region. Mercer County is growing, and we simply need more people to know about all the great opportunities that exist here.

We hope you enjoy this first edition of the *Penn-Northwest Digest*. If you have an idea for a future article or feature, please reach out to us. There are so many great stories to tell about this place we call home!

Rod Wilt, Executive Director

Penn-Northwest Digest

*Vol. 1, No. 1
Spring 2024*

Penn-Northwest
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Affordable Solutions For Corporate Expansion

Editor-in-Chief

Jane Goniea

Contributing Editors

Ellen Pardee

Contributing Photographers

Richard Orr, Thiel College

Tony Marr, Clever Marketing

Front Cover

Main Street Downtown Greenville Pennsylvania Facing West by RoundRhombus, available under Creative Commons BY-SA 4.0 at https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/22/Greenville_PA_Downtown_Main_Street_November_2021.jpg.

Penn-Northwest Staff

Rod Wilt

Gary Dovey

Melinda Bowen-Houck

Kerri Ericksen

Jake Rickert

Ellen Pardee

Jane Goniea

Ligaya Kurelko

About Penn-Northwest

We are the lead economic development organization that assists Mercer County's plans for growth. We envision an economically diverse, self-sustaining group of communities where business and employment opportunities exist, all types of education and recreational opportunities are present, and economic prosperity can be reached by all residents of Mercer County.

Growth in Greenville

November 9, 2023

Harrisburg, PA – Today, Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Secretary Rick Siger announced the approval of Greenville's exit from distressed status under the Municipalities Financial Recovery Program, known as Act 47. Governor Josh Shapiro and his Administration know the importance of strengthening our communities to make the Commonwealth a better place to live, work, and prosper.



Secretary Siger signed a formal determination letter finding that termination of the borough's distressed status was appropriate under Section 255.1 of Act 47. The decision was made due to Greenville's ability to effectively utilize the tools offered through the program to significantly improve its financial position and management infrastructure since entering Act 47.

"I want to extend my congratulations to everyone — the local officials, community leaders, businesses, and residents of Greenville Borough for helping to make this day a reality," said Secretary Siger. "Greenville has the tools to be financially successful and

truly make the borough a better place to live, work, and visit, and the Shapiro Administration looks forward to seeing the Borough prosper in the years to come."

DCED Deputy Secretary of Community Affairs and Development Rick Vilello was on hand in Greenville today to present borough Mayor Paul Hamill with the signed determination letter.

"I'm thrilled to be here today to join Mayor Hamill and the rest of the Greenville community on this exciting occasion," said Deputy Secretary Vilello. "Thanks to the hard work and resiliency of the local officials and residents of Greenville, we can officially turn the

page to a bright new chapter in the borough's story."

"It's been a long 21 years that Greenville has been in Act 47, and the community, the administration, and staff councils have all sacrificed and worked diligently to get us to this point," said Greenville Mayor Paul Hamill. "Our future is and will be brighter and more prosperous moving forward."

Greenville was designated as distressed on May 8, 2002, under Act 47. The determination was made because the town had run multi-year deficits and defaulted on its debt payments. Mary Jane Kuffner Hirt was appointed the Act 47 Coordinator for the borough in 2006.

"Greenville has taken steps to establish a sound financial foundation that should serve it well for the foreseeable future," said Kuffner Hurt. "The Borough Council and Borough Manager have worked in a thoughtful and consistent manner to broaden the revenue base in order to maintain municipal services and support capital improvements. Working with Greenville over the past 17 years and watching it exit Act 47 today has been a rewarding experience."

Greenville has made significant strides to improve its management practices and fiscal situation. The borough has eliminated its structural operating deficit, and has exhibited sound financial practices related to cash, budgetary, service level and long-term solvency. Greenville's debt service has consistently ranged from 11% to 12% of total annual general operating expenditures, and



timely debt service payments are expected to continue without Act 47 participation. Additionally, the borough has no outstanding claims or judgments that would place it in jeopardy of financial default. Surpluses are projected for the next five years, which affirms that Greenville has the capacity to meet its ongoing obligations after exiting distress. "Since entering Act 47 in 2002, much dedication and hard work have been devoted to

correcting the issues plaguing the community," said Greenville Manager Jasson Urey. "We are excited to celebrate our exit from the distressed municipality designation that the residents, businesses, and employees brought about through their sacrifices. Now, we take the next step in returning Greenville to a flourishing community."

Greenville is the 26th municipality to recover from distressed status under Act 47.



Source: Shapiro Administration Announces End of Greenville's Distressed Municipality Status Under Act 47 After More Than Two Decades, dced.pa.gov

Photos provided by Richard Orr, Thiel College, and the Greenville Borough.



We asked Mercer County Commissioners Dr. Ann Coleman and Tim McGonigle two questions about their view of Mercer County.

Q: What positive changes or developments have you witnessed in Mercer County over the years?

Ann: Increased cooperation. Over the past 10 years or so, organizations in Mercer County have been making it a priority to work together on projects to improve our quality of life, encourage community development, and diversify our local economy. By combining forces, organizations like our chambers of commerce, local governments, non-profits, and economic development agencies are better able to find sustainable solutions for our entire county.

Tim: Infrastructure! Unfortunately, Mercer County is the owner of hundreds of bridges that are at the end, or close to the end of their lifespan. We are tackling this difficult schedule three bridges at a time (3 each year). It's expensive and laborious to say the least but it's imperative to fortify our infrastructure as we continue to grow our community.

Q: Can you talk about a project or initiative you've undertaken to improve or contribute to Mercer County?

Ann: Prior to being elected to the Mercer County Board of Commissioners in 2023, I spent a lot of time volunteering for local organizations and teaching at Thiel College. Mercer County is full of people who are generous with their time and talents making it very rewarding to work with children, young adults, the local library, and multiple service clubs. This experience allowed me to contribute to projects all across Mercer County. I encourage everyone to find a place to give back to our community.

Tim: I'm proud of our achievement in a multi-partner collaboration that recently established the Independent Living Center in the city of Farrell. The County orchestrated this effort that heavily relied on State, County, and Penn-Northwest resources to improve the lives of our youth in Mercer County. This CYS center helps teens and young adults catch up on essential life skills. Our new center focuses on teaching young people how to cook healthy meals, do their laundry, and other types of everyday skills that most of us take for granted.

Introducing Commissioner Bill Finley

Dedicated to his hometown of Mercer, PA, Bill has been a volunteer firefighter since 1992, responding to countless emergencies and calls for assistance. In 2006, Bill took on the crucial role of Fire Chief, showcasing leadership skills that have helped shape the local firefighting efforts. In addition to his commitment to public safety, Bill is also a proud small business owner since 2013. Through this venture, he has contributed to the local economy and created opportunities for others in Mercer.

The dedication to community service extends beyond firefighting, as Bill served two terms on the Mercer Borough Council. In this role, he played a vital part in decision-making processes, ensuring that the town could meet the needs of its residents.

Bill embodies the spirit of Mercer, PA, having dedicated his life to the well-being of the community. Whether fighting fires, leading local initiatives, or managing his business, Bill is a true hometown champion, leaving an indelible mark on the place he proudly calls home.



Penn-Northwest's Annual Meeting

Every year, Penn-Northwest Development Corporation strives to move Mercer County forward, and every year, we take a look back at the results. Our annual meeting is a way to show our progress to our members and Board of Directors, and to thank them for their hard work throughout the year.

The sold-out event, which was held at the Corinthian Event Center, garnered over 180 guests and 40 sponsors. The morning covered voting issues and year-end reports from the Governance Committee and the Executive Director.

The event also marked the end of Brad Mantzell's term as Chairman and the entrance of new Chairman Brad Gosser, Executive Director of Greenville-Reynolds Development Corporation and outspoken advocate of Penn-Northwest. The Board of Directors voted to accept the slate of officer nominations unanimously. David Grande was elected Vice-Chair and Commissioner Matthew McConnell will continue as 2nd Vice-Chair until his term expires in January. Sarah Palmer was appointed

Treasurer and Robert Donatelli will once again serve as Secretary. Additionally, McGill, Power & Bell will serve as accounting advisory and Brouse McDowell will serve as law advisory.

The Board of Directors also voted to elect five new directors: Tim Feeney, Zekelman Industries, Chuck Evanoff, First Energy, Nathan Koble, National Fuel, Bryan



Outgoing Mercer County Commissioners Matthew McConnell and Scott Boyd with their Improvement Movement Champion Awards.

Saeler, Hudson Construction, and Tom Taborek, NLMK. These new Directors represent companies that support Penn-Northwest and its initiatives to repopulate Mercer County.

Of course, no annual meeting would be complete without awards. To honor our outgoing Commissioners, Penn-Northwest presented Scott Boyd and Matthew McConnell with Improvement Movement Champion Awards—awards given to those who tirelessly support Penn-Northwest's mission and programs day in and day out.

The Homegrown Award, presented by Jake Rickert, Director of Workforce Development, was given to Delaney Lantz, a star figure in the Future Leaders and its efforts to bring young professionals to the County.

RIEN Construction was presented with the Local Industry Award for their long-standing work and service throughout Mercer County. The New Industry Award, which highlights an up-and-coming business who chose to "Make it in Mercer County," was given to Advanced Power & Energy.

Quick PNDC Facts! In 2023, we had:

- 28 New Industry Leads
- 21 Project Proposals Distributed
- 9 Site Tours Conducted
- 4 New Companies Located in Mercer County
- 32 Local Companies Assisted
- \$7,350,000 in Direct Support
- \$410,000 Committed to the Mercer County Innovation Fund
- \$500,000 Brownfield Assessment Grant
- 18 New Members
- \$205,020 in Member Revenue
- \$40,000 in Foundation Support

Photos provided by Tony Marr, Clever Marketing.



Delaney Lantz, recipient of the Homegrown Award.



RIEN Construction representatives Steve O'Brien and Jess Sowers with the Local Industry Award.



PNDC Chairman Brad Gosser and Executive Director Rod Wilt with the recipients of the New Industry Award, Mike Yurisc and George Bulick of Advanced Power & Energy.



Electrifying Greenville

Advanced Power & Energy is “making it in Mercer County” with innovative battery technology and an investment of \$500,000 from the Mercer County Innovation Fund.

Advanced Power & Energy manufactures a wide variety of power solutions and power distribution equipment for grid stabilization and vehicle charging. Their Level 3 Electronic Vehicle Chargers are powered by specialized zinc nickel batteries and are capable of storing up to one million watts of energy. These batteries are safer and more sustainable than traditional lithium batteries, which have raised concerns about fire hazards and environmental impact. Besides being cleaner and

safer, these charging stations can take a car battery from 30% to 100% in half an hour, as opposed to Level 2 chargers, which may take as long as eight hours to charge a car.

This green technology is taking root in Greenville, PA, at the old Greenville Motors site. The company is supported by a partnership between Penn-Northwest Development Corporation and the Ben Franklin Technology Partnership.

Other partners include the Shenango Valley Enterprise Zone, the Community Hope Investment Partnership Group, Greenville Area Economic Development Corporation, and the City of Hermitage.

This investment is the first of many into the future of Mercer County. The Mercer County Innovation Fund was created to encourage innovation, entrepreneurship, and growth in the Mercer County area. Tech-based startups, small businesses, and manufacturers are all eligible for funding. Benefits include business support services through the Ben Franklin Technology Partners.

Source: Greenville Startup, Advanced Power & Energy, Receives Game-Changing \$500,000 Investment to Pave the Way for Safer EV Charging Stations, cnp.benfranklin.org

Carefill LTC Expands

Care-Fill®, a local leading provider of medication management through dose packaging, is excited to announce their move to a larger facility. Care-Fill® moved from 43 Williamson Road to 343 Mercer Road in Greenville last week. Bretton and Stacey Walberg are the owners of Care-Fill® medication packaging service and eleven pharmacies serving thirteen counties in Western Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio. They are proud to expand their packaging service and increase local employment opportunities in the area.

Care-Fill® is no stranger to a change of scenery; this will be the second time they have upgraded to a larger space. When

the packaging service started in 2012, it was operating adjacent to Jamestown Pharmacy in less than 1,400 square feet of space. Then in 2015, the Care-Fill® service relocated to Greenville, upgrading to 2,300 square feet of operating space.

"We have simply outgrown our current space. We are excited because our new facility is over 3 times the size of our previous space," commented Bretton Walberg, owner and pharmacist.

Substantial growth over the last several years and a continued desire to invest in their community were the catalysts for this change. The expansion combined with an investment

in equipment and technology will position Care-Fill® for a bright future.

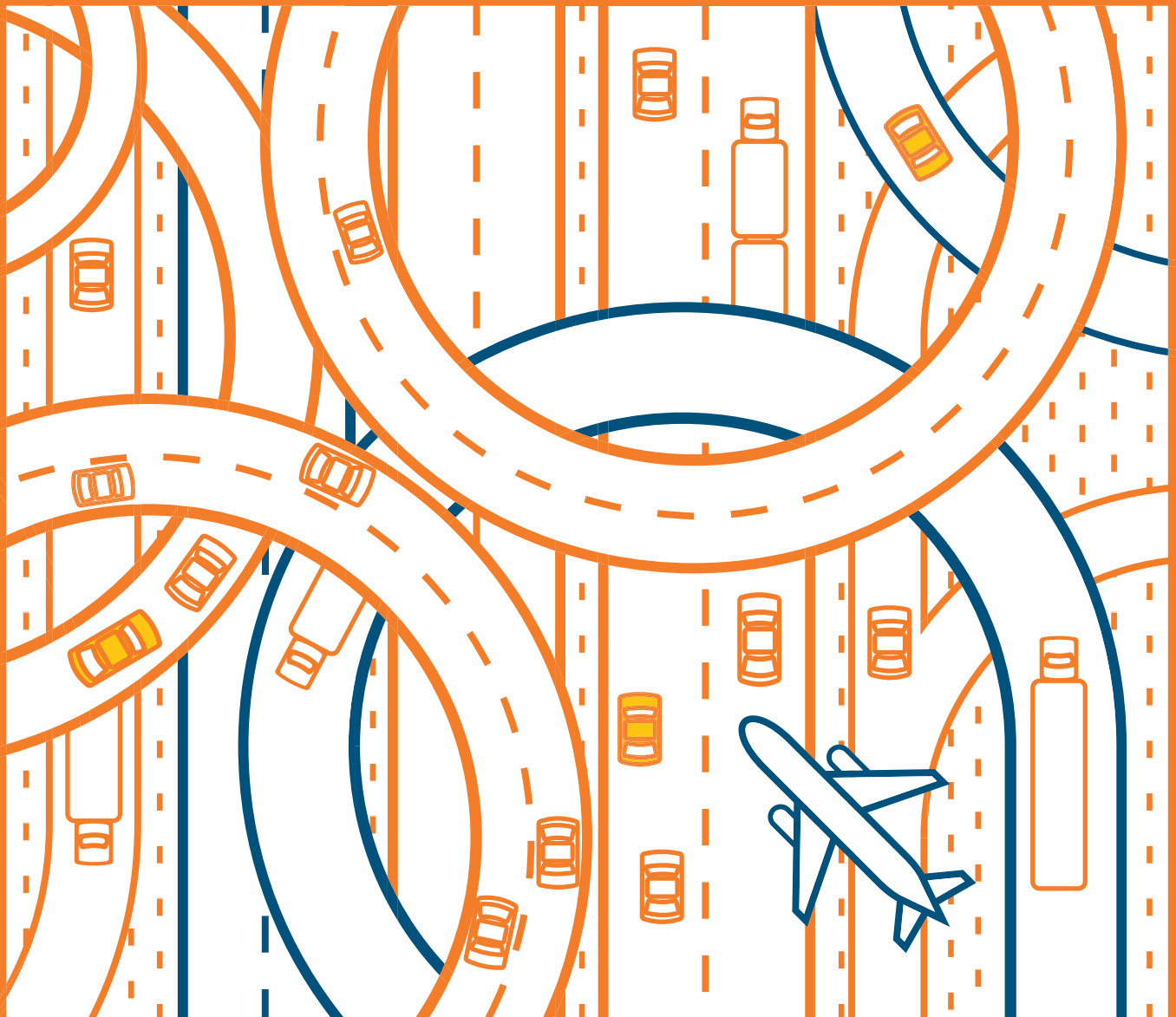
Care-Fill® currently employs 41 staff members who focus on everything from medication packaging and billing to marketing and delivery.

Care-Fill® medication packaging customers can continue to pick up their prescriptions at Greenville Pharmacy or take advantage of the company's free delivery service - which ever is most convenient for them.

Source: carefillltc.com/ltc-news



MOVE IT[→] TO MERCER



Uniquely situated at the cross section of Interstate 79, 80 and 376, Mercer County, PA is the perfect location to start, relocate or expand your business and life.

From a low cost of living to affordable land, a skilled workforce and access to major transportation hubs, the experienced team at Penn-Northwest Development Corporation is ready to make your move to Mercer a reality.

Mercer County also offers:

- Access to major highways, Class 1 Rail, air and shipping ports
- Strategically located commercial and industrial sites
- Affordable quality of life

See how you can move it and make it in Mercer!

PENN-NORTHWEST.COM
724-662-3705

Penn-Northwest
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Affordable Solutions For Corporate Expansion

